

Lull of the Ocean

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Summary: Following the activation of Eclipse Tower, Sveta mourns the loss of her brother, but finds comfort in a fellow member of the team . . . Spiritshipping, mid-Dark Dawn, T for possible language, violence, and suggestive themes. Please Read and Review!

***Chapter 1*: At Second Glance**

Edit: Golden Sun and all its characters belong to Camelot, ect. I claim no rights to any of these characters, the game, ect, ect. Right, then, let's do this.

Matthew slumped against the mast of the boat, groaning as his injuries were looked after by Rief, the Water Adept's eyes closed in concentration as he used Ply to mend Matthew's broken arm. The Venus adept had drained his psyenergy with a last second Odyssey, aimed at a monster creeping up behind one of his friends. That same friend was watching the healing process with worry, feral green eyes looking at Matthew carefully in case something went wrong. Matthew smiled up at the girl's pale face, and Sveta smiled back, her long pointed ears twitching a little. While Matthew had saved the Morgal beastgirl from further harm, he hadn't noticed a lone Calamari slide in from behind and slam its tentacles into him. He had gone flying, slamming to the deck and landing on his arm, causing a loud crack to be heard.

Matthew had blacked out immediately, falling into a black sleep. The next thing he know, he was looking into a pair of concerned, lime green eyes, framed by a small, white face and lavender braids with red ribbons in them. Suddenly, he it hit him. Sveta was . . . rather attractive. It wasn't like he hadn't thought this before, but this time wasn't like his once over of the beastgirl at the Teppe ruins. This time, he *looked*. He saw her thin swaying body, her long hair that draped over her narrow shoulders . . . she was really cute. Even her long, pointed ears and small, button nose made her look even more beautiful. Matthew was left speechless. This,

however, worried Sveta even more. "Rief!" she called, worried. "Matthew's hurt!"

And so the earth Adept sat there, letting the Mercury user restore the feeling to his shattered arm. He'd said enough to calm Sveta down, but the wind user wasn't, oddly enough, wasn't going to leave until she saw Matthew's arm move again.

"Done." Rief said, sagging against the mast. While superficial wounds were draining, accelerating bone repairs was even worse, causing the healer to experience the physical pain that the victim had gone through. From the look of Rief, Matthew's bones had been rather shattered. Rief looked pretty dizzy, too.

"Thanks, Rief." Matthew replied, smiling and flexing his arm a little to make sure it was working properly. He looked up at the boy, a little concerned. "Go ahead and get some rest. Sveta and I can finish this watch." The party had taken shifts watching for monsters, and it had been Matthew and Rief's turn to keep lookout.

"T-Thanks, Matt." Rief murmured, then staggered off, heading below decks to get some well-deserved sleep. The other two watched him go, and then turned to each other.

"A-are you sure you're fine? I can always-"Sveta started, ready to summon a Boon if the Earth adept needed.

"No, I'm fine." Matthew said, smiling at the beastgirl. "But what about you? I was kind of . . . out, so I didn't see the rest of the battle." His eyes were drawn to one of her hands, cradling her opposite arm. "You didn't heal yourself? Why?" he asked, holding a hand out, his way of asking if he could see her injury.

Sveta hesitated, and then held her right arm out, pulling back her ocean blue sleeve. Running down her limb was a rather bad bruise, turned an uncomfortable looking blue. "After the monster attacked you, I fought it on my own." She admitted. "I became . . . careless . . . and I did not avoid one of the strikes it made."

"Sveta . . ." Matthew chuckled at the girl's eagerness to protect her friends. He took her arm, Mending it in a matter of seconds. The beastgirl smiled as well, sitting there in silence, looking at Matthew. They shared a moment of silence, he a little nervous, with thoughts he was unaccustomed to in his head, while Sveta, as usual, had her brother on her mind secretly. Ever since her brother Volecheck, the king of Belinsk, had sacrificed himself during the Grave Eclipse, staying behind to aid his countrymen. The image of her noble brother striding into the eclipse tower after tossing them the strange blue orb now in her possession had been forever imprinted in Sveta's mind as the last time she'd see her brother alive. Now, she was helping to stop the nightmare he had unknowingly started, traveling with her friends to find something called the Umbra gear, equipment that seemed to be made of the shadows themselves, and a yellow orb to go along with the blue orb they had, and a red orb they had received from Unan, the emperor of Tonfon. Sveta had two of the pieces of the Umbra gear; two leather gauntlets that did an amazing job of keeping out the sun's heat, and a pair of sharp Knuckles, purple flat plates that were strapped to the gauntlets, short spikes on the top that easily punctured the flesh of monsters. Every day, unknown to the rest of the team, Sveta took out the orb in the solitude of her cabin and stared into it, reminiscing. She wasn't weak, no. that was far from the problem. But she had watched the last member of her living family walk to what was probably his death. Her

inner peace had been unbalanced, and she was no longer the girl she had been.

"You're thinking of him again, aren't you?" Matthew's voice cut through Sveta's thoughts, and she refocused, flushing.

"I'm sorry? What are you talking about, Matthew?" she asked, looking at his worried face.

"you get this cloudy look whenever you think of your brother, Sveta. You sit there, remembering. Sometimes you look as if you're going to cry, but you swallow your tears and get up as if nothing's occurred. It happens too often to be anything else. You miss him, Sveta . . ." Matthew said.

"How could I not, Matthew?" Sveta admitted sadly, long ears drooping on both sides of her face. "he was the only family I had left . . . he was always there for me. Now I am alone . . ." her body language turned closed, and suddenly an uncomfortable silence descended. Matthew frowned; realizing that he'd made her turn inward again, and tried to think of what to say. He cast his thoughts to what his father had said in the past, and realized Isaac had said nothing about dealing with a depressed princess in waiting whose country was being destroyed by a plague of shadowy beasts. But . . .

"Sveta . . ." He started. "Th-There's a story my dad told me . . . about him and my mother . . . I don't know if it will make you feel better, but I think you'd like it . . ." He said.

Sveta sniffed, and then looked at the blonde, ears perking in curiosity. "I-I guess . . . I could afford to take my minds off of recent events . . ." she said slowly. "please, tell me this story, Matthew . . ."

"Well, it starts before I was born, after the Golden Sun event . . ." Matthew started . . .

***Chapter 2*: A Proposal**

(I do not own Golden Sun, the characters, plot, ect, ect.)

"Well, after the activation of the Mars Lighthouse, the Warriors of Vale returned home. Well, actually, their home had been destroyed when Mount Aleph sank into the ground, so Isaac, Felix, Garet, Jenna and the other survivors from Vale took their families to Kalay." Matthew corrected himself. "They were seen as heroes by the majority of the world, so they traveled all across Weyard at the request of various rulers and politicians to aid with trouble in countries, monsters and the like. Kraden accompanied them several times, acting as the liaison and educator for the group. I think they even visited Belinsk when you were younger, Sveta."

The beastgirl nodded, remembering. "It was not a long trip, but I remember they were looking for help in obtaining a Roc feather, and that my father decided to help them, seeing them as kind and responsible enough to carry a feather of the bird sacred to our people. It is a shame that Tyrell broke that same feather."

Matthew chuckled. "Well, if he hadn't, we wouldn't be here . . ." he pointed out. "Anyways, as time passed, the members of the group began to settle down. Piers started traveling abroad; Ivan met a girl from Contigo and settled down while Mia did the same with some boy from Imil. Sheba . . . well, she stayed with my uncle Felix. It was clear from the start that the two were inseparable. They helped my dad and Garet build the Lookout Cabin after the Mourning Moon appeared, to keep a close eye on where Sol Sanctum used to be. But the day before the Cabin was finished . . . they vanished without a trace.

'Jenna was devastated. She had just gotten her brother back, after thinking he was dead, only to lose him again . . . she became inconsolable. She returned to Kalay, and shut herself in her house. No one, not even her parents, was allowed in, and as far as they could tell, she wasn't eating or drinking anything. Her spirit was broken. It was then that Isaac had an idea . . ."

"Actually, in all honesty, I suggested it." A familiar voice behind the two adepts interrupted, making them jump. They turned around, seeing a pair of glasses framed around two kind, knowing eyes, grey hair and a beard smoothed down, and robes filled with a variety of colors, though on the Alchemy scholar Kraden, they didn't look that odd at all. After all, he had been that way for over thirty years now.

Sveta flushed. She had been so focused on Matthew's tale; she hadn't even heard the old man walk across the deck to them, quite a feat against someone with hearing like her.

"My apologies, both of you. I didn't mean to startle anyone." Kraden chuckled. "I heard Matthew recounting this, and wanted to make sure that Isaac hadn't forgotten any details when he told his son. Matthew, you don't mind if I tell Sveta about this part, do you? I'll let you continue when we get to what Isaac actually did."

"I don't mind at all, Kraden. You know better than I do, since you were there." Matthew replied, smiling at the Alchemist.

"Well, having traveled with Matthew's mother and father, I knew that they harbored affections for each other. Matthew, did you know that once, when we were in Madra, before Isaac and his team joined us, and Sheba asked Jenna if she liked Isaac, your mother turned so red I was sure she was going to burst into flames?" Kraden asked.

Matthew shook his head, grinning widely. "I'm pretty sure that my dad doesn't know either. This means that if she wants to ask dad to tell Flint to cut my hair again, I know what I'm telling her I'll tell Uncle Garet about . . . I really hate Flint's haircuts." He put a hand to his blonde hair, shuddering, and then joined in with Sveta in laughter. The Venus Djinni was below decks, giving Himi, the newest member of their group, the basic tutorial on Djinn.

Kraden gave a small chuckle. "Anyways, I thought that maybe, if Isaac finally proposed to Jenna, in the right way, he could pull her out of the gloom she had descended into. I told Isaac, and although he did want to, he was terrified that Jenna would take the proposal the wrong way, and become even more upset. So I suggested a plan to him. He visited Ivan, and borrowed one of his Djinn, a rather musical fellow by the name of Lull. He also got the help of a smith from Yallam, named Sunshine, who had forged weapons and armor for the team. Isaac scoured Weyard for materials that Sunshine used to create a ring, a beautiful ring made of pure mythril, and a diamond that outshines any other. Only then did he go see Jenna. He-

"Kraden, you said I could tell this part." Matthew reminded, making Sveta giggle as the scholar turned slightly red. Kraden mumbled something about going to catch up with Eoleo about Obaba, than excused himself, heading down to the lower decks once more.

"My father snuck in through a window and confronted Jenna. At first, she tried to burn his head off for sneaking into her room, but their friendship was strong enough that he was able to calm her down. But what came next surprised my mother completely. Isaac asked her to dance with him."

"Dance . . . ?" Sveta said, caught off guard despite herself.

Matthew nodded, smiling bashfully at his own father's bravery. "Yeah. Lull, of course, provided the tune, and for a while, my mother forgot her sorrow, swept away in a dance with the man she'd had a crush on for the longest time. And just as Lull was ending the tune . . . he pressed the ring into Jenna's hand, knelt down, and asked her to marry him."

"And, since you're here, I guess she said yes." Sveta finished with a smile. Her eyes had become less foggy, and her ears were perked up a margin. "Thank you for telling me this story, Matthew. It certainly distracted me . . . and I enjoyed it. What happened to the Djinn, anyways?"

"Who, Lull?" Matthew asked, thinking for a second, and then shrugged. "Honestly, I don't know. Ivan eventually released most of his Djinn, Lull amongst them, so I guess he's somewhere in Weyard."

"I guess so . . ." Sveta agreed softly, and then she blinked, her ears perking up attentively. "Matthew? Do you hear that?" She asked warily. She could hear the softest roaring, a noise that did not belong on a boat. A roaring that was slowly growing in sound.

"I can't hear it . . . but I think I can see it." Matthew replied, his cheery voice suddenly grim, and Sveta followed his gaze to a sight that sent fear dripping down her spine.

There, on the edge of the horizon, was a giant whirlwind, tearing across the ocean.

And it was heading straight for them.

***Chapter 3*: Panic and Silence**

(Once again, Golden Sun and all its characters belong to Camelot, ect. I claim no rights to any of these characters, the game, ect, ect. Do I have to do this every chapter?)

Matthew was first to recover, finding his voice and sprinting to the stairs that led below decks. "Eoleo!" He yelled, a hint of panic in his voice. The Mars adept had been down helping his crew with a breach one of the monsters had cause, but he was up in seconds at Matthew's call, his overly large axe at the ready. His eyes narrowed when he saw that there were no monsters onboard, and opened his mouth to scold the two for bringing him up here for no reason. The words died in his mouth, though, as he followed their gaze to the giant cyclone bearing down on them. "Get below and warn the others!" He shouted, spinning around and sprinting for the wheel, intent on sailing the ship out of the path of the gale.

Meanwhile, Sveta and Matthew shot downstairs, intent on finding their friends. As they passed startled crewmen, they yelled warnings, and soon enough the entire ship was busy with frantic preparations. Everywhere the two looked, someone was tying a barrel down or securing a porthole, making sure that if Eoleo did manage to evade the howling winds, nothing and nobody would be taken by it. At last, the duo reached the cargo hold, the most open space in the entire ship, where the other three members of their party, Amiti, Karis, and Tyrell, were practicing their swordplay, or in Tyrell's case, axeplay. Despite the enormous power behind his swings, though, he was never able to even come close to the other two adepts, whose light blades allowed them to move out of the way with time to spare, so the fighting was mainly between Amiti, with his feather-light Sylph Rapier,

and Karis, with the oddly named Kikuichimonji, which possessed more power behind its swings, so the two were equally matched. The moment Matthew and Karis rushed in, though, they stopped, sensing something was wrong.

"So? Why don't we just outrun it?" Tyrell asked, rather oblivious as he was quite often.

"Didn't you hear them? It's faster than us!" Karis yelled, as by now the winds sounded as if they were right on top of them. "Do you think Eoleo can-"

There was a sudden lurch, and suddenly the loud roar ceased, replaced by a gentle whistling that sounded through every plank in the ship. Everyone onboard stopped moving, listening to the strange noise.

"Are . . . did we escape it?" Amiti said quietly, not wanting to ruin the sudden reprieve.

"I'm afraid not." Eoleo said grimly, climbing down the ladder. His usually messy clothes had become even more disheveled, as if he had been sailing through a storm, which, in a way, he had. "The twister was too strong," The captain continued, his eyes clouded. "I was barely able to get inside before it hit us."

There was a moment's silence, then someone spoke the question on all of their minds. "Are . . . are we going to die, then?" Sveta asked, fighting back tears. Was this really the end? Would she never get to avenge her brother's sacrifice, never save the people of her fair Belinsk, never-

Then she saw the look of puzzlement cross the pirate's face. "By all rights, we should, but if that was what was going to happen, we should have already been whirling around outside among the splinters of the boat. No, the ship's still

holding together completely. I think, strange as it sounds, we might-"

"Might be safely inside of it?" An elderly voice asked, and Kraden stepped off the ladder, pulling a scroll from his cloak, the twinkle in his eyes that meant he was seeing something that excited him very evident. "That's exactly what's happened, Eoleo. We're inside of the legendary Otká Vortex.

There was silence, during which everyone stared at Kraden. Had Rief been awake, he would have probably been able to explain what on Weyard Kraden was talking about, but since he was asleep, it fell to Himi, who had just climbed down the ladder with Flint on her shoulder, to ask. "The Otká Vortex?"

Kraden sighed. This was exactly like traveling with the warriors of Vale, having to explain every new thing that they came across, not that that was a bad thing, necessarily. He then rolled open the scroll, turning it around to show the group a complicated sketch of the gale that had picked them up, a boat inside of it, and an island. "The Otká Vortex is a strange phenomenon of Weyard, supposedly created by the Jenei. The theory is similar to the Cloudy Passage, that it allows the traveler to reach an inaccessible place, in this case, Otká Island, which is where the Vortex gets its name. The idea is simple. The Vortex picks up the traveler's boat and carries it to the island, which is surrounded on all sides by a group of impassible, jagged rocks jutting out of the water, though no one knows the reason for this natural looking barrier. It passes the island twice a day, where it reduces in speed, allowing the traveler to sail out of the eye and make dock on the island. The island has been rumored to hold an amazing treasure, but all those who were lucky enough to end up on the island saw that the cave in which the treasure is said to be held was impassible."

"In short, we are not going to be suffocated to death?" Matthew asked, relieved.

"From the sound of it, this will give us plenty of time for repairs." Eoleo added, sounding satisfied. He nodded to everyone, and then began climbing up. "I'm going to go let the boys know." He hauled himself up the ladder, grinning, and a minute later, a roar of enthusiasm could be heard from the entire crew of pirates.

Karis smiled, relieved as much as the others. "We'd better get prepared. Am I right in thinking we're going to check out this cave?" She asked Matthew, who nodded in reply. Tyrell gave a cheer, excited by the prospect of exploration, and everyone went to their cabins to gather their equipment, with the exception of Matthew and Sveta, already in full gear from the watch.

Matthew finally relaxed, loosening the grip on Sveta's hand he hadn't even realized he'd been holding. But now he noticed, and he pulled his hand away, flushing red. "H-How long was I . . .?" He asked her nervously.

"Since the Vortex lifted the boat." The beastgirl replied, smiling a little, her own cheeks a little pink. "I was as scared as you were, and I needed the company of a friend as much as you."

"Exactly." Matthew quickly agreed, though something in the back of his head protested the idea of a simple friendship. At that moment, the winds started to die down. "I guess we're here." He said, making sure the Gaia blade was strapped to his back.

Sveta nodded, strapping on the Umbra knuckles. Besides the gauntlets, they were the only pieces of the gear they

had retrieved so far. Suddenly, a thought occurred to her. "Matthew?" She asked the Venus adept.

"Yes, Sveta?" Matthew replied, turning to look at her.

"About your story . . . did you ever find out what the song was?" She continued. She didn't know why she asked, it was just something nagging at her.

Matthew thought, and then chuckled. "Dad never told me, now that I think about it. But if I ever find out, you'll be the first to know." He promised, and then gestured to the ladder. "After you."

(It always bothered me that there was a random tornado that picked up your boat without destroying it in the middle of the ocean, so I came up with a name and an explanation. On another note, Karis's blade, that I'm not spelling again, is a pain to type. Please review!)

***Chapter 4*: Discomfort**

(Once again, Golden Sun isn't mine, nor are the characters. They belong to Camelot. Can somebody tell me why I have to do this every time I post a chapter? .)

In all honesty, Otka Island wasn't much to look at. Beaches surrounded the border of the landmass; small sparse forests, to which Eoleo immediately directed the crew to gather lumber, were scattered around the area. The island was mysteriously flat, except for a giant mountain in the center of it. And in the side of said mountain, as if it was neatly scooped out, was the entrance to the Otka Cave Kraden had mentioned earlier.

To Sveta, the island seemed harmless enough . . . until she stepped off of the ship's deck and onto the beach's grainy sand, and took a sniff of the air with her hypersensitive nose. Immediately, she could tell that something was wrong. The air was rather . . . She wasn't sure what it was. Malicious? Aggressive? Neither word seemed completely right.

"Sveta? Is something wrong?" Rief asked, shifting his grip on the mace he held tightly. Usually, the Mercury Adept was on the secondary team with him, Tyrell, and Eoleo, but since they were in completely new territory, and they had a new member to the team, Sveta had elected to stay behind with Tyrell to help Himi and Rief watch the ship while Matthew, Karis, and Amiti helped the Pirate Captain protect his crew while they gathered the necessary lumber. Sveta thought Amiti probably hated that he had to protect a bunch of thieves of the ocean, and she barely suppressed a grin. Unlike the Prince of Ayuthay, Sveta did not harbor ill will towards the crew. In fact, she was grateful that they had

been so willingly to accompany them across eastern Weyard, when they could have gone back to their families at the temporary camp outside of Champa, on the edge of the Grave Eclipse.

"I'm not sure, exactly . . . Himi, do you sense anything?" Sveta asked the young Venus adept who had recently joined them. Himi had a knack for sensing hidden things, due to the psyenergy she was gifted with.

The earth user closed her eyes, and the red tattoo of a third, open eye glowed faintly. "There's . . . nothing here," She replied, concentrating on her Search ability, a technique she was still perfecting. "But . . . from the cave . . . there's some sort of presence. I'm not sure precisely what it is, but there is something." She opened her eyes, relaxing. "That's all."

"So? Let's go check it out, then!" Tyrell insisted, fidgeting impatiently, his hand constantly on the grip of his Herculean Axe. The Mars Adept was, as usual, eager to get into a fight, to do *something*. Without warning, he suddenly began to stride across the beach with the intent of hiking to the cave-

Sveta sighed, shaking her head. Tyrell was so blunt and headstrong; he often made rather unwise decisions. It wasn't that he was stupid, he just had the impatience and short temper of a Fire user, something Sveta was surprised to see was absent in Matthew, his own mother attuned with the fire element herself.

"Tyrell, if we leave, who's going to guard the ship?" She called after Tyrell, making him freeze mid-step. "We'll wait for the others, and then go as a group."

Tyrell flushed in embarrassment, nodding sheepishly. "Sorry, Sveta, I'm just bored." He chuckled, turning around and returning to the boat. "At least when I'm keeping guard

when we're on the ocean, I can keep an eye out for rare weapons, or monsters or something. But here, there's just nothing to do . . ."

Sveta nodded in understanding. "It's alright, Tyrell. They shouldn't be much longer, anyways." She reassured him. After that, the group lapsed into silence. Sveta enjoyed Tyrell's moments of rationalization, although she still stung a little from the first time she'd met the team, and the Mars Adept had called her a 'Kitty-Dog'. Nobody else had found it funny, either, and she distinctly remembered the glare Karis had directed at him afterward when they were on their way to return the bag to the two men from Tonfon.

She smiled a little at the memory, though her fur was still on end from that lingering, uncomfortable presence . . .

(I just realized, I have reviews! Just three, but I should probably respond to them, even if one was half a year ago!

Mystics Apprentice: Once again, thank you for the glowing review, and the critiques as well! I have to say, after working with you for a while, I've gotten to know you as an amazing author and reviewer! I hope you find the time to read more of this story and the next ones!

Culebra de Sol: Short, but that IS a rather good summary of chapter two. I hope you enjoyed it what I have so far! I know my uploads can be rather erratic, but I'll try to keep the story coming at a constant rate. ^^

Anon Dude: I'm not sure what to say. Honestly, I don't . . .)

***Chapter 5*: Grim News**

(Sigh. Golden Sun is not mine, it is Camelot's. I wonder if they actually scour the web, looking for people who don't add this . . .)

"Amiti, how do I tell a girl I like her?"

Startled, the Mercury Adept tore his gaze away from Karis, who was helping Eoleo and his crew, using whirlwind to rid the trees that the pirates had cut down of branches and leaves so they could saw them into planks for repairing the ship.

Amiti flushed red, looking over at the person who'd asked him the question in surprise. "M-Matthew?" He asked, caught off guard, and then sighed gently. "Is it really that obvious?" He asked the earth user, his shoulders slumping in admission.

Matthew blinked, confusion entering his frown. "Huh? What's obvious? Who . . ." His voice trailed off, and he followed the line of sight the Prince of Ayuthay had been following seconds ago. "No . . ." He murmured in surprise, his eyes going wide. "You mean . . . Karis? Amiti, do you-"

"Shh!" Amiti hushed Matthew quickly before anyone else could hear him. "Yes, but please do not go announcing it to the entire camp!" He replied quietly, his face crimson by now. "But, you are correct . . . ever since Kolima and the Dream Tree, I have had affections for her." He admitted, grinning sheepishly as he turned his eyes once again toward the mint-green haired girl.

Then his mind processed Matthew's question fully. "But then, who are you talking about?" He asked, refocusing on the blushing Venus Adept. When Matthew didn't answer, the prince studied his friend's face for a second, using his remarkable powers of deduction from the Insight Glass to figure it out. Not Karis, obviously, since he'd shown pleasant surprise at Amiti's own liking of her. Himi was far too young, so that only left . . .

"Sveta?" He guessed, and then smirked as Matthew started in surprise. "I thought so. I do not need Mind Read to tell who it is, Matthew. But, you were saying?"

"Well . . . I just don't know what to say to her," Matthew sighed, his shoulders slumping. He sat down on a stump from a tree that was cut down earlier, large enough for a few people to use as a sitting place, though at the moment he was the only one. "I mean, I know how to talk to her, but when it comes to telling her how I feel . . ."

Amiti sighed, sitting down on the same stump. "I am afraid, Matthew, we both have a problem with our love lives . . . I cannot help you, because Karis does not know how I feel about her, either . . . We both have it rather hard, do we not?"

"Yeah, what is it about those Jupiter Adepts? My Uncle Felix fell for one too . . ." Matthew joked, getting a short laugh from both of them, followed by a few seconds of silence.

"Matthew . . . there is another problem." Amiti said eventually. "You might not want to hear what I am about to say, but you have to know what you are up against. Sveta and I . . . we are both royalty, and as such, we will be pressured to marry for political gain. In mine and Karis's case, I could probably argue the point using her political

status as the child of one of the Warriors of Vale to convince the chancellor." He put a hand on Matthew's shoulder. "But Sveta is of the Beast Tribe. The chances of your love, no matter how much she may possibly return it, being accepted by her people, are slim. I'm sorry . . . but you need to know that she might have to turn you down because she could destroy her country by marrying you. I'm sorry, my friend."

Matthew was silent for a moment, then let out a deep breath, nodding. "I thought so . . ." He said wearily, and Amiti felt a pang of sympathy for the blonde earth user.

"However . . . you said the chances are small." Matthew continued, and he looked up, smiling at Amiti. "That means there's a chance . . . thanks, Amiti."

"Not a problem at all, Matthew." The water adept replied while smiling back, relieved to see Matthew wasn't put out by the news. If the leader of their group was discouraged, then the team would be unable to function properly.

"But about Karis . . ." Matthew continued. "I think you should be direct with her and tell her how you feel. I've known her for a while, and being vague isn't her style. She likes it when people are honest with her."

"I will keep that in mind." Amiti promised with a smile, and then turned as he heard a shout from the girl they'd just been talking about. "Looks like we have all the necessary lumber," He commented. "Shall we go regroup with the others and explore the cave? Perhaps, with our powers, we can make some headway where regular explorers have failed."

"I was thinking the same thing." Matthew said, standing up and stretching. "Maybe, if we're lucky, things will work out for us . . ."

And when he said that, Amity knew that he wasn't just referring to the cave.

(Looks like Soulshipping's not the only pairing I'm doing, huh? ^^)

Okay, lemme see, two new reviews . . .

Culebra and Feith: I've got a little bad news . . . I've already written all of this story, and this is just the uploading part. However, I am going to write two more stories cannon to this one, and you can trust they'll be longer and much better, so you have something to look forward to after this! But thank you for the reviews, anyways! ^^)

***Chapter 6*: The Cave**

(I don't own this game or its plot, Camelot does. I don't like doing this, it's annoying, but I guess I must pay my dues for having such an inspirational game to play and write about . . .)

"So, Himi, which way do we go?" Matthew asked the fellow Venus user, his Gaia Blade found in the temple on her home island carefully slung behind him, due to its impressive size.

After returning to the ship, it had been decided that he, Sveta, Tyrell (Who had begged shamelessly to go along), and the Yamata Priestess would go explore the cave. Himi, due to her Search Psyenergy, had become an invaluable part of any exploration.

Meanwhile, back at the boat, Karis, Amity, Eoleo, and Rief would be helping speed up repairs, so the crew would be ready when the Otka Vortex returned. They had, according to Kraden, two hours left before the twister returned, so they didn't have that much time.

The four had entered the cave quickly, only to find that their way was already blocked. A giant chasm stood between them and the other side, the hold seeming to have no end, with only a few crumbling pillars too distantly spaced for anyone, except possibly Sveta, to jump across with enough confidence of reaching the other side.

"We cross, of course." Himi said with a chuckle, and the tattooed symbol on her forehead glowed brightly as she activated her powers, and she pointed to the middle of the chasm, where the support structures were furthest in

spacing. Suddenly, the air began to sparkle and blur, and two more columns began to drift into visibility.

Sveta smiled gently. "Nicely done, Himi," She complemented, eliciting a proud smile from the girl's mouth. "You're getting much better in using that Psyenergy."

Himi nodded graciously, and then turned to face the nearest pillar, taking a large leap . . . and landing dead center of the platform.

Only to slip immediately, screaming as she began to fall down into the abyss

.

"HIMI!" Matthew yelled, shocked, and quickly focused his Psyenergy, summoning a Spire to make an outcropping on the rock, one that sprouted underneath the younger Venus adept just before she fell into the pit.

The Yamatan gasped as she landed on the Spire, but she quickly sprung up, jumping briskly back onto the pillar, knowing Matthew's Spire would only last moments, and so it did, the rock receding into the masonry she was standing on.

"You alright, Himi?" Matthew asked, and she nodded back.

"Sorry, I don't know what happened. It was like the wind came up and swept me off my feet." Himi apologized, after she finished gasping for breath.

"It's alright." Sveta reassured her, jumping to the same pillar after the Venus Adept moved onto the next one, with considerably better results.

Suddenly, the beastgirl's ears pricked up. "Shhh . . ." She called back softly, silencing Tyrell, who had just been insisting he be the next on to cross, not that Matthew had been complaining.

For a moment, Sveta wondered if she'd just been hearing things . . . but no, there it was again. A soft, melodious whistle, like a flute's beautiful trill, was echoing from the other side of the gorge.

"I hear it, too." Matthew added quietly, reminding Sveta that the others were behind her. She continued to cross, following Himi's jumps, with Matthew behind her, and an uncharacteristically quiet Tyrell in the back.

They reached the other side with no further mishaps, and now they could hear the melody clearly, a tune none of them had heard before. It was sad, lonely, and gentle, with an undertone that made Sveta's fur stand on end.

Then her sharp eyes picked out a small, white and purple shape a little ways down the alcove. "Guys," She murmured to the other three, getting their attention as she pointed. "Over there . . . that's where the music's coming from. I think . . . it's a Djinni."

"Where?" Tyrell said excitedly, and a little too loudly, then he clamped his mouth shut as the music cut off. "Oops . . ."

"Tyrell!" Matthew groaned, and then dove towards Himi, the weakest of the four, pulling her down as a twister erupted from the disturbed Djinni, followed by a barrage of Plasma bolts.

If it keeps this up, it'll bring the ceiling down on us! Matthew thought in panic, quickly throwing up a Clay Spire wall to protect him and Himi, while Tyrell tried to deflect the

incoming bolts with his golden axe and casting multiple Guards to lessen the damage to himself.

"Sveta!" Matthew yelled over the roaring winds, but the Morgal beastgirl was already ahead of him, charging out into the storm as if it were a gentle breeze, launching her own Whirlwind in the opposite direction, the clashing winds canceling each other out. She rolled under a searing lightning bolt, and as she sprung to her feet, she let out a howl, and a near-blinding burst of light obscured her in the few seconds it took for her to transform into the snarling mass of power and speed that was her beast form. She sprinted forward, launching herself right through the Plasma with no apparent harm to herself. She got right up to the Djinni and swung her powerful paw, which sent the Elemental crashing into a wall, and when it tried to lift itself up, it found itself pinned to the wall, staring into cold, feral eyes.

"I don't want to hurt you, little one." Sveta growled, her gaze filled with a quiet menace, and barely controlled fury that came over her when she changed into her wilder self. "Just surrender."

"Alright, I give up!" The Jupiter spirit quickly agreed, and it sighed with relief as the powerful, bipedal she-wolf returned to being her, if not human self, rather close to it.

Now Sveta got a better look at their assailant. Very similar to the common 'Gust' Jupiter Djinn appearance, this one departed from the usual with the single head tail divided into four, much more wing like tails that made an X shape. Also, his feet were pointed, looking similar to conductor's batons.

"Forgive me, miss, but I thought you four were a group of monsters, disguised." The elemental being apologized profusely. "I often get attacked while composing my melodies."

"So you were the one who was singing . . ." Matthew said slowly, walking over with the other two to observe the new Djinni, then his eyes widened in shock. No, it couldn't be. The chances of it being the same one on the day he spoke of it were just impossible. "What's your name?" He asked with barely controlled excitement, making the others look at him curiously.

"Oh, my! Where are my manners?" The Jupiter elemental straightened up, then dipped his head politely.

"My name is Lullaby, or Lull, as my previous partner, Ivan, called me. Pleased to make your acquaintance."

(Hehe, I can't say that it wasn't coming, and probably almost all of you saw it about to happen. A few notes, though. One, I wondered how Matthew and the entire team of eight, or in this case four, were able to jump onto such small pillars all at the same time, and how they did it without ever falling. Secondly, now we know the reason some Djinn attack you on sight. Tyrell scared them silly. XD

And I finally had an actual battle scene! Please read and review, and tell me how I did!

Oh, Reviews!

Culebra de sol: I wish I could, and I actually plan to for two of the chapters in this, but this story is actually short, and will be followed by two more that will be *much* longer. So never fear on length!

AnonDude: Not as bad as the last anon, and while I do admire your request, it has one flaw . . . beastmen are all related to mammals. There's not a single reptile or bird in the group, so dragon wouldn't be either. However, I like the name Lance . . . I might model a beastman after him for an upcoming story, if it's alright with you.)

***Chapter 7*: Old Faces, New Friends**

(Golden Sun. Not mine. Camelot's. *sighs*)

To say the least, Matthew was amazed. It had only been a few hours ago that he had told Sveta about the very same Djinni that they were talking to, yet here he was, on an island in the middle of nowhere!

"Ivan? You don't mean Karis's dad, do you?" Tyrell asked, as surprised as Matthew, though in his case it was the fact that this elemental knew his friend's father.

"Karis? You mean, my old partner's young child?" Lull asked, his wings going still for a moment, and then he jumped up, laughing in a pleasantly surprised tone. "Of course! Karis is here, on a journey like her father before her! Then that must mean . . ." His head turned to look at Tyrell, and he squeaked. "Garet! Of course, you must be his son! I'd recognize that fiery red mane anywhere!" Tyrell nodded, rubbing the back of his head in mixed bashfulness and confusion.

Lull paused, blinking as he fixed his gaze on the two females. "Pardon me, but I do not think I have had the pleasure of meeting your parents." He said politely.

Both Sveta and Himi smiled, the latter stepping forward. "My name is Himi, daughter of Susa and Kushinada, and priestess of Yamata." She said with a gentle curtsy, and then turned to look at Sveta.

"And I am Sveta Czamaral . . ." The beastgirl hesitated, and then continued quietly. "Queen of Morgal." In truth, with her brother most likely dead, she was the ruler of Belinsk . . . but

she felt unworthy of the title, much less to speak it aloud, with her people abandoned and being slain in their own city due to actions she, abet unwittingly, made that brought about the Grave Eclipse.

Lull bowed his head, his white head wings flattening in respect. "A pleasure, Ladies." He said softly, then his green, gemlike eyes saw Matthew, and he froze. "No . . ." He said in surprise, and then flew up, making eye contact with the earth adept. "Could it be . . .? Sir, you look almost exactly like Isaac . . . but those eyes, those are Jenna's eyes . . . are you, perhaps . . .?" He murmured, looking Matthew up and down.

The Venus user smiled, and then nodded. "I'm Matthew, their son." He said proudly.

The Jupiter Elemental let out a cry of delight, and then jumped up on top of Matthew's head. "You are!" He agreed with an enthusiastic beat of his wings, and then he took off, zipping around the four and humming a joyful, melodious tune, making Sveta and Himi giggle.

"Sirs and Ladies, I would be honored to accompany you on your journey!" the Djinni trilled, coming to rest on Sveta's pale lavender hair. "Foremost, I am a Jupiter Djinn, with the power to call for a temporary truce in battle using my musical skills to distract the enemy, giving you the opportunity to heal your wounded and strengthen your defenses. But, in addition, I am a composer, a bard, a performer! If your spirits ever falter during your journey, allow my music to strengthen your resolve!" He gave the team a polite bow, then dissolved into several particles, and as each one merged with Sveta, setting themselves to her, they gave a short whistle, the affect causing a short little tune that sounded triumphant and exciting.

"Showoff." Matthew laughed, the others joining in. "He's talented, but he is such a show-off."

"They're on their way back!" Karis called from the crow's nest. She dove down the side, but instead of making a Karis-sized hole in the deck, she used a gust of wind to soften her landing, not even causing a scratch, though it did surprise a pirate who was in the middle of climbing the ladder up.

Rief and Amiti looked up from the side of the boat, where they were using Psyenergy to keep more water from flowing into the leak in the boat. Eoleo and his crew, meanwhile, were busy securing the new planks made from the forest logs over the hole.

Sure enough, Matthew and the others were on their way back, a rather triumphant air to their walk. Himi was in the middle, clutching a rather large cube, glowing light blue, with strange designs covering it.

Rief grinned. Quality Zol, a material found in the mines of Passaj, was extremely receptive to Wind Psyenergy. The block Himi was holding, he deduced, was probably left over from some sort of machine that powered the Otka Vortex. And with a block that size, Obaba, Eoleo's grandmother, could probably make a rather impressive weapon or piece of armor.

"Great job!" He called, though he worried that the Himi was possible struggling from carry such a large load. The Venus Adept was the youngest of the group, Rief being only slightly older.

"That's not all we found!" Matthew replied cheerfully. "Lull, want to meet Mia's son?"

"Mia?" an excited, musical voice replied from Sveta's direction, and a Jupiter Djinn materialized, darting over to the two Mercury Adepts and looking them up and down. "A pleasure to meet you, Rief!" He said. "I'm Lull, one of Ivan's old comrades!" He looked over at Amiti next, his eyes blinking, confused. "But I thought Matthew said Mia had a son and daughter, not two boys?"

"Why do people keep thinking we're related?" Amiti laughed, bowing to the Elemental. "Forgive me for correcting you, but I am Amiti, Prince of Ayuthay."

"Another member of Royalty? Why, when I traveled with Ivan, all we had was the Prince of Lemuria and the Child of the Gods!" Lull chuckled, and then he let out a yelp, being hugged from behind by Karis.

"Lull, is that really you?" Karis asked, her face beaming with joy.

"Karis!" Lull whistled happily, landing on top of his old friend's head. "I'm so happy you remember me!"

"How could I forget you? You sang me to sleep every night for the first year of my life." The Wind Adept replied fondly. "But what are you doing here, of all places?"

"Looking for inspiration." Lull replied, letting out a hum. "I've been having trouble composing songs of late, so I came here to seek enlightenment. However," He added, looking at the group, exuding confidence, "With you all as traveling companions, I'm sure I'll find all the inspiration I need!"

(Okay, we're almost done with this one! I just have a short epilogue to type up, but when I upload it, I'm also going to post the first chapter of my next story, Tears and Triumph, cannon to this one! I hope everyone had enjoyed this so far!

And now for reviews.

CdS: Indeed, he has a tendency to be klutzy! And as for the longer chapters, I hope you realize that they'll also be coming out less frequently, so enjoy every word! ^^

Artur: Thank you! I was hoping that people would enjoy it, despite how obvious it was!

Read and Review, please!)

***Chapter 8*: Shocking Sounds**

(Okay, last chapter! Please read it, since it has an important point that will be big in my next story, which luckily will be uploaded the same day as this!)

Matthew sighed happily, lying down on the comfortable bed.

After over a month, maybe two, of frantic searching, the team of eight, with the addition of Kraden and Eoleo's pirate crew, had managed to find all the pieces of the Umbra gear, as well as the three colored orbs needed to open the gate to the Endless Wall.

The journey had been physically and mentally exhausting, but now, finally, for the first time since the Adepts had been in Ayuthay for a short visit, Matthew's bed was on solid ground. They had rented the inn at Tonfon for the night to get the best sleep possible before the climb to Apollo Sanctum.

As he sat there, Matthew thought of his own parents. What had Jenna and Isaac felt, he wondered, the night before their own climb to the top of another place that had a connection to the sun, the Mars Lighthouse? Had they been as nervous as he had been?

Not for the first time, he wondered how his father and mother were faring in this catastrophe. Sure, both of them were powerful adepts, and Garret was with Isaac, too. And Ivan, most likely, had visited Kalay sometime recently, though there was no way of telling if he had stayed there long enough for the town to be covered in the dark shroud of the Grave Eclipse.

The thought that worried Matthew, however, was that both locations, the Lookout Cabin and Kalay, were within the range of the darkness, according to the map Kraden and Rief had drawn that had shown them the present reach of the Eclipse. But he had to have more confidence in his parents, and focus on his own mission, to activate the Apollo Lens.

Suddenly, there was a whistle at the door, followed by a fluttering of wings. Matthew grinned, standing up and walking to the entrance, opening it and admitting Lull into the room. The Jupiter Djinn had taken to randomly visiting each Adept, asking questions about their culture's music. He had taken particular interest in the four members of the party that had joined last, Amiti, Eoleo, Sveta, and Himi, since he did not know their cultures as well as the other four.

The wind Elemental also took request for songs, though that sometimes required the Adept to teach Lull the unfamiliar melody. Not that much of a problem, actually, since all they really needed to do was set the Djinn to themselves. Once part of them, Lull could search their memories for a time in the past when they had heard the song, and memorize it easily.

"Afternoon, Matthew." The Jupiter Djinn trilled pleasantly as he hovered in, admiring the Venus Adept's nice room.

"Same to you, Lull," Matthew chuckled. Lull was, in a way, an unofficial member of their main team. He had a personality as diverse as Echo, Flint, and Pewter. It was interesting, since Lull wasn't a Venus Djinn like the other three. "Are you visiting randomly?"

"Actually, since you're the unofficial leader, I thought you might like some support before the big climb tomorrow." Lull

replied, hopping up on the bedside desk. "Do you have anything specific, or shall I select a song?"

Matthew thought for a moment, and then he remembered his parents again, and smiled. "What about the song you played for my mom and dad?" He asked. He'd been so busy, he'd forgotten to ask the Djinn about it, and he still needed to tell Sveta . . .

"Of course!" Lull agreed, and then whistled a quick scale, much like a human clearing his throat before talking. He paused for a moment while Matthew sat down, then began to whistle the tune, and for the first time Matthew heard the song played so his father could win over his mother-

And then he discovered he had already heard it before. The slow notes, paired in twos or threes, the thrill traveling through him, this sounded almost identical to-

"Wait." He interrupted, quieting Lull. "That's Arangoa Prelude, isn't it?" He remembered that song as the one Sveta had requested be played when it was time to reunite with her after they had found the Roc feather.

"I believe it is, Matthew. After all, I am the one who composed this piece." Lull replied, confused. "I wrote it a long time ago, for an adept who had fallen head over heels for a girl who he could never be with. I felt so bad for him, I wrote him this song, and he proceeded to marry her, to my delight. I thought it only fitting that your father, who loved Jenna dearly, yet could not find a way to pierce her sorrow, should use the same song to woo her."

Matthew leaned on the bed, overwhelmed. Did Sveta know the significance of Arangoa Prelude when she had chosen it? If she had, it would probably mean . . . That she had

affections for one of the four that had been part of the team then.

But if so, who was it?

Rief?

Tyrell?

Amiti?

Or was it, possibly, him?

(I know that was a rather large gap of time, but I wanted this story to focus on Otko, as the next one shall. I hope you all enjoyed the story and the small 'cliffhanger' at the end! Please Read and Review, and check out the next story in my Spiritshipping series, Tears and Triumph!)